The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

Little Footsteps.

PRECIOUS little footsteps
Pattering o'er the floor;
We listen for thy coming,
Yet ye come no more.

Sunny rippling ringlets
Falling o'er thy brow;
Lips that scarcely knew but smiles,
How we miss thee now.

Eyes so bright and sparkling—
Brimming o'er with mirth;
We had never known till now
Half thy real worth.

Closed the heavy eyelids,
Still the sunny hair;
Smiles all frozen on thy lips,
Yet in death how fair.

Cold the little fingers,
Cold the dimpled feet;
Free from pain the little form,
The heart has ceased to beat.

But in the Father's mansion,
Or in the golden street,
We'll hear again the music
Of those little feet.

Mrs Lucy M. Creemer.

The Flight of the Birds.

O WISE little birds, how do you know
The way to go
Southward and northward, to and fro.

Far up in the either piped they;
"We but obey
One who calleth us far away.

"He calleth and calleth year by year,
Now there, now here;
Ever he maketh the way appear."

Dear little birds, He calleth me
Who calleth ye;
Would that I might as trusting be!

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHO can tell what wretchedness Alf felt when he turned away from the Hospital door!

Where could he go? what could he do? He had not money enough to pay for a night's lodging. He had eaten nothing since the night before but a few small cakes that he had bought in the street. He was weary and worn with the excitement of the day, and now to find himself unsheltered in the street, with the certainty that he would be obliged to stay there through all the hours of darkness, was more than he could bear.

He had no more courage to sustain him. Sitting down on a doorstep, he put his head in his hands and cried bitterly.

Of course the tears neither fed him, nor found him a place to sleep, and yet there was a certain sense of relief in them.

The hours wore on, and Alf was still sitting on the doorstep. He had ceased to cry, for the violence of grief must soon spend itself. The night dews were falling and the wind blew cool off the water. The boy's limbs grew stiff and his whole body seemed full of the discomforts of the night.

Of all the unhappiness of the week, this was the worst. In all the other dangers and difficulties he had had a companion in misery—now he

was alone. There was no one to whom he could speak. No one to say a sympathizing word to him.

A thousand times he wished that he had never seen New York—that he had never been tempted with the idea of making a fortune—that he had never left his home and the dear friends there who had made all his past life so comfortable.

Everything seemed so strange to him; he would have been much less troubled to have been left alone in the country through a night, for the trees and the stars would have seemed like companions to him.

But here, in this strange city, with its unfamiliar sights and sounds, nothing seemed friendly to him. The narrow street, with its high brick walls on each side, seemed like a prison. The stars, seen through that narrow opening above his head, seemed *so* faint and far away. It was as if the heavens were displeased with him for the wrong he had done, and were moving away from him.

Then the wierd glare of the gaslights, that shone dimly through a fog that had been drifted in from the sea, made the whole scene almost terrible to the excited boy.

His imagination was busy, and as the strange gaslights flickered and wavered, and the heavens were so far away, he almost persuaded himself that he had fallen into the hell that he had once heard described in a revival meeting, and that there were demons flitting about him, with torches in their hands.

He was so wretched, that it was easy to persuade himself that he had fallen upon the place of torment, and he saw how the punnishment of sin had come to him, and brought him down to the place of darkness.

This, then, he said to himself, is one of God's ways of punishing sinners. They make their own shadows. They surround themselves with hells of their own creating, and are led to cry to God in their extremity. And oh how sweet the thought is, that he will hear us when we do cry. That there are no hells that are beyond His reach, and that His tender hand is always near when we feel out for it in the darkness.

If He *will* but deliver me from this wretchedness, I will never, never, never tempt Him again, to compell Him to give me such chastisement. Such prayers for help as Alf had never prayed before, he prayed that night in the midst of his desolation.

Would not God hear and answer his prayer?

Surely a God of love would not turn away from a pleading voice when any creature in distress cries to Him. And yet His mercy sometimes delays. He tests the sincerity of the penitent, and waits to see that the wanderer's face is really set homewards before He goes out to welcome him.

The night was advancing. One after another of the hurrying multitudes had left the street for their own home shelter.

A strange stillness had followed their going. It was unlike the stillness of the country, where the night winds breathe through the trees, and all growing things seem perpetually whispering to the skies.

Here, unless the stones cried out, there was no voice to speak.

The clanging tongue of iron was not stilled. Bells were garrulous, telling the hours as they passed, and one near by reported half hours and quarters.

Alf listened to them all with a painful interest. Every one of these voices brought him nearer to the morning; and every time he heard them he was thankful with a deep thanksgiving.

One o'clock had just struck when the heavy footsteps of a policeman were heard approaching. Nearear and nearer he came, until he was opposite where Alf was sitting. He was on the other side of the street. As he comes opposite the doorway where Alf is crouched, he catches sight of the figure and stops.

Alf is breathless. He does not know what the great man may intend to do.

Now he comes across the street, and says with a fierce voice —

"What are you doing here?"

"I am not doing anything," Alf replied.

"Well, why are you not home before this time of night?"

"I have no home in the city."

"Go to a hotel, then."

"I have no money to pay for lodging."

"And have you no friend that you can go to?"

"None; I do not know one person in all this great city that I could ask to shelter me for the night."

"Well, you must move on from here."

"I am doing no harm here, sir," Alf pleaded.

"I can't know what you are doing when my back is turned."

"I will do nothing."

"I tell you you must move on. It belongs to me to keep stragglers away from people's houses, and I am going to do my duty. So, if you don't move at once, I will move you."

Alf saw that there was no use to parley with this man. He had no place to go. There was nothing but empty streets for him to move on to, and he *must move on.*

A hard world it is, indeed, he thought, that will not let a poor boy rest after such a day as I have passed.

Yet there was nothing for it but obedience. He must do what the policeman ordered him to do.

With nowhere tc go he must yet make an appearance of going. "To move on," was his destiny, though there was nothing to move for, and nowhere to move to.

He tried to stand on his feet; but his legs had grown so stiff that he found using them almost impossible.

"I believe I cannot walk," he said to the policeman.

"But you must," the policeman replied. "You *must* move on, I tell you. You've got legs, havn't you?"

"Yes, but they are so stiff now, I cannot use them," Alf replied.

"But I'll *make* you use them. There's nothing like a good dose of *will* to grease lame legs."

Alf tried again, and this time with success. He got upon his feet, and with much pain walked. The pain gradually grew less as he walked on, and so he walked and walked, with aimless steps, only with an eager waiting for the break of day.

The night went at last; as all nights must, and morning came. It was delight to Alf when the early morning stir of the city began. The carts of the market-men coming in from the country, seemed like friends to the desolate boy. The whistle of the early trains coming from afar were welcome sounds to him.

Now came one very close to where he was walking. The depot was near. Alf felt an irresistable impulse to go to it, and look on the faces of the travellers who were coming. Anything that was out from the city gratified him.

The train reached the depot just as he reached it; and the long line of travellers began to pour out from it. Alf looked listlessly into the faces as they passed him, when suddenly he saw — what? Did his eyes deceive him?

No; he gave a cry of delight, sprang forward, and was clapsed in his father's arms.

Mrs. E. M. Bruce.

Old Ideas about the Universe.

ALL our young readers may not know what strange views of this world and of the regions round about it, have been held by men who were thought to be learned in the past. Here is a description of the heavens and the earth as it was given by Cosmas, a man of science, more than twelve hundred years ago.

He considered the world to be an immense flat surface. Its length which should be measured from east to west, is double of its breadth, which should be measured from north to south. In the center is the earth we inhabit, which is surrounded by the ocean; and this again is encircled by another earth, in which men lived before the deluge, and from which Noah was transported in the ark.

To the north of the world is a high conical mountain, around which the sun and the moon continually revolve. When the sun is hid behind the mountain, it is night; when it is on one side of the mountain it is day. To the edges of the outer earth the sky is glued. It consists of four high walls, rising to a great height, and then meeting in a vast concave roof, thus forming an immense edifice of which our world is the floor. The edifice is divided into two stories by the firmament, which is placed between the earth and the roof of the sky. A great ocean is inserted in the side of the firmament remote from the earth. This is what is signified by the waters that are above the firmament. The space from these waters to the roof of the sky is allotted to the blest; that from the firmament to our earth, to the angels in their work as ministering spirits.

Scholars in our times are not taught such lessons in geography or astronomy as these. The human mind has grown somewhat wiser since this description was written.

GOD did not take up the three Hebrews out of the fire; but he came down and walked with them in it. He did not remove Daniel from the den of lions; he sent his angels to close the mouths of the beasts. He did not, in answer to the prayer of Paul, remove the thorns in the flesh; but he gave him sufficiency of grace to sustain him.

To a Bee.

THOU wert out betimes, thou busy, busy bee;
As abroad I took my early way,
Before the cow from her resting-place
Had risen up and left her trace
On the meadow, with dew so grey,
Saw I thee, thou busy, busy bee.

Thou wert working late, thou busy, busy bee;
After the fall of the cistus flower,
When the primrose of evening was ready to burst
I heard thee last, as I saw thee first;
In the silence of the evening hour,
Heard I thee, thou busy, busy bee.

Thou art a miser, thou busy, busy bee!
Late and early at employ,
Still on thy golden stores intent,
Thy summer in keeping and hoarding is spent,
That thy winter will never enjoy;
Wise lesson this for me, thou busy, busy bee!

Little dost thou think, thou busy, busy bee.
What is the end of thy toil.
When the latest flowers of the ivy are gone,
And all thy work for the year is done,
Thy master comes for the spoil;
Woe then for thee, thou busy, busy bee!

For the Myrtle.

What the Brook said.

THEY pastured the cows in a valley away over the hill, for it was a hilly county where Robert and Bessie lived. Every morning they drove the cows over the hill to the pasture, and every evening they went after them. What a nice, pleasant walk it was; and when they stood on the top of the hill what a view they had! Below them was the village, with the meeting house and the schoolhouse. And they could see their father's house and Deacon Jones's house with the big elms in front of it, and Squire Brown's with the tall cupola, and Farmer White's red barn and the miller's mill with its great spreading arms. They very often stopped to look at this view although they had seen it so many times. A little way down the slope of the hill they came to a pretty brook where the cows always had to stop and drink, and where the children often stopped and sat down on the stones and told stories.

"Now," said Bessie, "this brook makes me think of something I have been reading."

"Just like you, Bess, you are always thinking of something you have been reading. What is it, pray?

"Now while the cows are drinking I'll tell you. It is what a brook said, and as brooks must all talk pretty much alike we can imagine this brook said it."

"Go on," said Robert.

"I am a hundred years old"—

"A hundred!" interrupted Robert, "as well say a thousand, for our teacher says there is no telling how old the world is, and I don't see how you are going to know how old this brook is."

"Now, Rob, don't interrupt me. 'I am hundred years old; yes, two, and I don't know how much older,' You see the brook don't care how old you call it. 'I rise way up in Hickory Hill, and if I had staid there this village would not have existed. I water the the roots of hundreds of trees, and give drink to flocks of birds and animals. All those green elms along these valleys get nourishment from me. After I leave the hills I flow into Farmer Goff's meadow, and there I am useful to men and cattle all day long. The cows stand in my channel for hours in the shade, while I wash their feet and limbs, and I like very well to see their great brown eyes looking down at me. Once a year I am obliged to wash the sheep, which is not a pleasant task, for they care very little for me. I supply the farmer's table with trout, and every week do all his wife's washing. I keep the meadow green, and in the spring spread out in a broad, fertilizing sheet. Then from the meadows I go to the roads. I afford refreshment to travellers and their weary horses at all times, day and night. We do not hush ourselves into useless sleep eight hours of

every day, as your children do. After crossing the ford I go to farmers, and without me what would they do? Then I go round Meeting-house Hill and by the schoolhouse."

"Then I go into the village and cross it in three different places. First at the old bridge where many a schoolboy has taken an accidental bath, — at the country road and at Dibble's bridge, where folks like to go a-fishing. Then I enter your grandfather's farm, then another brook joins me and together we make a pond and turn a mill. I could tell you a good many stories about that pond. When it is frozen over people love to skate on it. The girls used to slide round after the boys, holding fast to their coats, but now-a-days the girls skate too. One dark night when the wind and rain sobbed dolefully through the trees, a woman came wandering along the bank, her hair streaming in the wind, she crying and complaining bitterly. A hasty plunge told what she had done. I closed my waters decently over her, and hastened away. After I have passed the mill I have a little basin to enjoy myself, and to join the children in their sport. But dear me, the cows are almost out of sight."

"Yes, and if your brook has finished its talk I think we had better go along after the cows."

"I think the brook could tell us a good many nice stories, and perhaps when we come along next time pretty bro)k you will tell us one."

So saying the children started on a run down the hill after the cows.

N. T. M.

A Child's Description of Sunset.

"Mamma," said a little prattler of three years, "only see God hanging his lamps over uncle's house." Mamma looked out of the window and there was the sun in all his glory tinging the western sky. It was indeed beautiful. There are many grown people whose description would not come near to that of the child, and whose appreciation would not be half so keen. Surely that child had an innate sense of the doctrine of correspondence.

The hand of the generous man is like the cloud of heaven that drops upon the fruits, herbage, and flowers. But the heart of the ungenerous man is like a desert which swallows greedily the showers that fall, but produces nothing in return.

Waiting for a Bite.

Why don't the fishes bite, grandma?
Why don't the fishes bite?
I'm going to catch one for supper —
Grandma, you said I might.

Hush, Towser, do leave off barking!
You'll frighten them all away.
O, I love to go a-fishing!
And I've been a-fishing all day.

Do wait till I catch one, grandma —
Till I have one little bite;
I'm coming right in to supper; —
No, you need not "wait all night."

Twenty great flopping fishes,
That looked like clouds in the sky,
I saw just now in the water;
I shall catch one, by and by.

Did you say that they *were* clouds, grandma?
O no, your mistaken quite;
The clouds would fall in the water splash,
And give me a dreadful fright: —

And pray don't call me a "goosey,"
Nor ask if I meant to beat
The fishes dead with my fish-stick,
When they hop up round my feet.

"No fish in this water," grandma?
Just wait till I get a bite!
You will hold up your hands and wonder
To see such a splendid sight.

I've counted them — two, ten, forty —
All wriggling under the tree,
And into the frying-pan skipping,
For Towser, and you and me.

Sure enough, my grandson Dan
Is a mighty fisherman.
If things go on so, there'll be
No fish swimming in the sea
By the time he gets a beard!
Well, I always was afeard
Little Dan would grow too wise
For his years; but, bless his eyes!
Mine have seen a funnier sight —
Grown men waiting for a bite.
Daft ones, wondering all day long,
Why this tiresome world goes wrong;
Lazy-bones, that think to get
Money without earning it;
Orators, their senseless word
Flinging to a senseless herd —
None of understanding good —
Nothing to be understood; —
Men that angle for a mate,
Hook-a-dangling, bare of bait,
Always in the shallowest place: —
Writers, O the idle race!
Spinning out long strings of rhymes,
Hoping from dull brains betimes
Grand ideas to bring to light.
Silly Dan, a sillier sight
Every day the world can show
Than yourself, look high or low;
Though you seem, dear, far more bright,
Don't you? — waiting for a bite!

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON XCXI.

THE WOMAN PUTS HER MITES IN THE TREASURY, AND GREEKS DESIRE TO SEE JESUS.

"A light to lighten the Gentiles."

SCRIPTURE,— Mark xii. 41–44; Luke xxi. 1–4; John xii. 20–36.

Question. — In what part of the temple was Jesus sitting?

Answer. — Mark xii. 41.

NOTE. The chests in which gifts of money were deposited were placed in the court of women.

Q. — What did Jesus see as he sat there?

A. — Mark xii. 41.

Q. — Who came among others?

A. — Mark xii. 42.

Q. — How much did she deposite in the chest?

A. — Mark xii. 42.

Q. — What portion of all her property was this?

A. — Mark xii. 44.

NOTE. Two mites was less than half a cent.

Q. — How did Jesus say her gifts compared with all the others?

A. — Mark xii. 43.

NOTE. These gifts were for the support of public religious services. And this woman saw the worth and felt the need of them so completely that she gave all she had to sustain them.

Q. — Who came to the temple to the feast among the Jews?

A. — John xii. 20.

NOTE. These men, being Gentiles, could enter only the outer court of the temple. They, no doubt, had come to believe that the God of Israel was the true God. But in order to enjoy all the priveleges of the chosen people of God without giving up native land and becoming citizens of another nation.

Q. — What did the Greeks desire?

A. — John xii. 21.

Q. — To whom did Phillip tell the request?

A. — John xii, 22.

NOTE. As they believed that Jesus had come to be king of the Jews and to bless their nation only, Phillip and Andrew seem to have been unable to understand why Greeks should wish to see their Master.

Q. — When Phillip and Andrew informed Jesus of the request, what did Jesus say?

A. — John xii. 23

NOTE. Jesus had come for the whole world, and these were the first of the far-off nations who had come to him; and naturally he thinks of his great mission to all nations, and of the hard way through which he must bless them, as Greeks wish to see him. The Son of man was to be glorified by his death through which all nations should be brought to his light.

Q — Thinking of his death, what did he say?

A — John xii. 24.

Q — What words of his did Jesus apply to himself?

A — John xii. 25.

NOTE. If Jesus should not die upon the cross he could not reach the whole Gentile world, and his life would be comparatively no life But by suffering upon the cross, he would give eternal life to the world and unto all nations.

Q — Why was Christ's soul troubled?

A — John xii. 27.

NOTE. He shrank from the cross, yet for the very purpose of saving the Gentile nations, some of whom had now come to him, he had come into the world. And there was no way to save the Gentile world except by his death

Q — What did he at last say?

A — John xii. 28.

Q — What word immediately came to him from heaven?

A — John xii. 28.

Q — Was the sound of the voice heard by the people who were near Jesus?

A — John xii. 29.

Q — What did Jesus say the voice came for?

A — John xii. 30.

Q — What did Jesus say of the world?

A — John xii. 31.

NOTE. The word rendered judgment is *Krisis* in the original. It means that now there was to be a great change in this world's affairs. Greeks had come to him. The whole world would come to him at last. All national distinctions, so far as they affected brotherly relations between men, were to be abolished. It was to be seen, too, that God had made of one blood all nations of men, and that he was the God and Father of all mankind. All those great changes in the world's affairs which Christianity was to effect would now begin.

Q. — What should he accomplish by his crucifixion?

A. — John xii. 32.

Q. — What did Jesus mean by being lifted up from the earth?

A. —John xii. 33.

Q. —What did the Jews believe respecting Christ?

A. —John xii. 34.

Q. —What did Jesus say to their questions?

A. —John xii. 35, 36.

Q. —What did Jesus do after this?

A. —John xii. 36.

The Saviour seems to have been almost, if not quite, as deeply affected by the desire of Greeks to see him, as he was in the garden of Gethsemane, and for the same reason. The world was to be reached by his death, and the coming of the Greeks brought most vividly to his mind the means by which that portion of mankind was to be reached and saved by him. The universality of his mission was brought close to his soul.

Sunday-School Libraries.

A writer in the *Sunday-School Helper* objects to the use of Sunday-School Libraries, and gives four reasons why they should be abolished:

"1. That the books generally are of an improper character. 2. That a portion of the best talent of the school is taken from the teaching force to attend to the library. 3. The great expense of furnishing and replenishing a library. . . . 4. The heathenish, unchristian, impolite, and annoying system of interruption which goes on during the entire session. The librarian and his assistants are incessantly moving about the room, nudging the teachers, attracting the attention of the children, directing the minds of all from the lesson and other exercises."

He proposed as a substitute for the library the distribution of weekly papers, including a magazine containing suitably-written stories as well as miscellaneous matter. But the popular demand for Sunday-School Libraries seems to be greater than ever, and the standard of books called for is steadily rising. There are certainly two sides to this question. Libraries as they are, and as they are used in some Sunday Schools are of doubtful advantage. But they might be greatly improved and differently used so as to be of real profit.

Lost Books.

Many library and class-books belonging to our Sabbath Schools are lost; and lost through the carelessness of those who use them. Children and their parents or guardians at home are to blame for this. In many of our annual Sabbath School reports we hear this complaint. It is a great wrong, and it ought to be righted. Scholars are not honest in being thus thoughtless and careless with books which do not belong to them, but to the Sabbath School; books which have been purchased with the money of good friends who have thus sought to make the school both pleasant and profitable to those who attend it. The truth is, as Mrs. Kenney of North Bridgewater said in an excellent Report a week or two since, "the books come *too easy*." If parents and scholars had to purchase them, or if payment was required for the loss of them, there would be fewer losses of books. We commend the subject to all the teachers and scholars of our schools. Do not get your class-books nor library-books mislaid. Keep your eye on them, and carefully preserve and return them to the school when you have done using them. They are not yours, remember; they belong to the the school.

Bible Schools.

There are now in Jerusalem five Christian schools, attended-ed by four hundred children of both sexes; and in all Palestine twenty-five schools, in which about one thousand scholars are taught. The Bible is taught in these schools, and they are called by the natives "Bible Schools." In addition to these schools three Orphan Asylums have been opened for the admission of nearly two hundred children, and about one hundred have been refused admittance for want of room.

The Best Remembrance.

We remember things daily. We are often very particular in charging our memory with matters which we deem of much importance. We remember when to eat and when to sleep, and when to go to our studies or our business, or amusements. Most young people remember when they are invited into agreeable company, or when a rich entertainment is offered them. But how many people there are who do not keep in mind one of their greatest interests, and that is, their relation to God, and their duty to him. The Bible says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." This is the best remembrance. We should have it every day. David said, "On thee do I wait all the day."

"Hidden Seeds."

We are frequently asked if the names of those who find answers to the enigmas can be published in the MYRTLE. With our present plan that is impossible, as the new MYRTLE is printed before the one previous reaches its readers. When we began the weekly series it seemed best to print the answers the week succeeding the enigma, to prevent confusion; which does not allow us to make notice of any finders of the hidden seeds. We are glad, however, to hear always that there are such, and if they are like us, the pleasure of solving the mystery is reward enough for the labor. This will be an answer to our little friend in Indiana, as well as many others.

AN OHIO Sunday-School report tells of one man on the prairie who, in poor health, walks regularly eight miles on Sunday to superintend two schools; of another who attends church in the village and then walks ten miles to his Sunday-School work; of a Norwegian boy who comes two miles to Sunday School, assuring his superintendent that he will always come, if he has to wade in snow to his neck; and of another little fellow whose ears were frozen on his five-mile tramp to Sunday School.

And here is another account of what zealous women are doing in Ohio for Sunday Schools:

A good man's wife, way out on the frontier, would have Sunday School, if there were but her husband, her little Anna, and herself to attend. She would read a chapter, talk about it, sing and pray, and call that Sunday School. Her resolution took root, and its influence is felt upon fifteen interested scholars, besides her own household. Not fifty miles from Alexandria two lady superintendents have courageously persevered in their good work all winter, and other female laborers have every Sabbath faced the storms and suffered cold for the same glorious end."

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